Strip Mining Operation for Copper

By: Mike Law

“Let’s go!” shouted Elaine.

“But...but mom said we should never go near The Pit,” said Billy.

“Don’t be such scaredy cat! Scaredy cat! Scaredy cat!” taunted Elaine.

“Quit it! Fine, I’ll go,” agreed Billy reluctantly.

Elaine and Billy both lived in the sleepy town of Cedar City, Utah. Just a few years back, it was a booming community with a main street lined with shops of all sorts. Sadly, the town fell on hard times when J&R Minerals packed up and left town for good. This was way before Elaine and Billy’s time mind you.

“Last one down is a rotten egg!” shouted Elaine gleefully.

“No fair! I wasn’t ready!” complained Billy as he ran after his sister.

The Pit, as the townspeople nicknamed it, was actually an abandoned strip mining operation run by J&R Minerals. Elaine was admiring the glistening greenish pool of water when Billy arrived out of breath.

“We...shouldn’t...be...down...here,” gasped Billy.

“I double dare you to jump in!” challenged Elaine.

“Are you nuts? Mom said the entire town is sick because of this place,” answered Billy.

“Mom said this...mom said that. Look Billy, we’re both fine. Chad and Jenny are always sick because they’re dirt poor. Ain’t no one else to blame but themselves,” explained Elaine.

“Dad said J&R is to blame for all of the town’s problems too,” said Billy quietly.

“You’re no fun Billy. Supper’s going to be on the table soon. We best be on our way you scaredy cat,” poked Elaine once more.

As Elaine and Billy raced back up The Pit, they passed by a bunch of city folk dressed all in black. Elaine and Billy were puzzled by the letters on the sides of their trucks. It read EPA.